Sunday May 08, 2022
The Church's Finest Hour

Ephesians 4:11-13
11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,
13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

The word 'knowledge' means precise and correct knowledge.
The five-fold ministries are working to equip the saints and build up the Body of Christ so that we all come to: (A)the unity of the faith (B)precise and correct knowledge of the Son of God and (C)maturity to Christlikeness. This is where we are headed.

Ephesians 5:25-27
25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,
26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,
27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

The Lord Jesus is working to bring the Church to be a glorious Church – a Church that is sanctified, cleansed, holy and without any fault.

Today, we bring a simple message of exhortation, called 'The Church's Finest Hour'.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The First Four Hundred Years (AD 30-AD 400)
The Holy Spirit was poured out on 120 believers on the Day of Pentecost. The work of the Spirit resulted in 3,000 people being saved after the very first sermon was preached. Many continued to be added to this community of believers. With the persecution in Jerusalem, the disciples were scattered, and this resulted in fires of revival being spread far and wide. Communities of disciples were raised up having the "same DNA" as the Jerusalem church. These communities were experiencing the mighty move and work of the Holy Spirit among them. The apostle Paul blazed a trail spreading the Gospel around

the Mediterranean and into parts of Europe. The Gospel was taken to the then known world, the Church was strong and vibrant.

The Dark Ages (A.D. 401-A.D. 1500)
However, with time the church became institutionalized, and within the church there was a steep decline of its moral and spiritual condition. Form, liturgy, and rituals replaced Scripture and the life and work of the Spirit. The laity did not have access to the Scriptures. Wrong practices such as prayers to the saints, belief in purgatory, trans-substitution, indulgences, and relic-worship were introduced. The Church was in a period commonly referred to as the Dark Ages for about one thousand years.

Revival, Restoration and Glory (1500-Present)
The Church, which had become a spiritually feeble entity during the Dark Ages (400-1400 A.D.), began to go through a process of revival and restoration. Beginning in the 1500s, there was a steady increase in the depth of spiritual understanding and revelation imparted to the Church.

The Protestant movement in the 1500s brought the revelation of salvation by grace through faith; the Puritan movement in the 1600s brought an understanding of the importance of water baptism and separation of Church from the state; the Holiness movement in 1700s brought an understanding of sanctification—the Church being separated from the world; the Divine Healing movement of the 1800s brought a revelation and demonstration of God's healing power for the physical body; and the Pentecostal movement in the early 1900s brought a revelation of Holy Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues.

These briefly highlight the restorative work of God's Spirit in the Church following the Dark Ages. However, from the turn of the 20th century, beginning with the Pentecostal movement, the Church has witnessed an unprecedented increase in the restorative ministry of the Holy Spirit. After the Pentecostal movement, there have been several clearly identifiable moves in the Church that have caused the Body of Christ to rise to higher realms in God. And here we are today!

WHAT IS GOD DOING IN THE CHURCH TODAY?

It is important to know what God is doing in the Church today, so we can align our lives to His working.

God by His Spirit is working in the Church to carry out what we have read in the Scripture passages in Ephesians 4 and 5:

The five-fold ministries are working to equip the saints and build up the Body of Christ so that we all come to:
(A) THE UNITY OF THE FAITH – we all agree on the Core, while having differing expressions
(B) KNOWING JESUS ACCURATELY - knowing Jesus for who He really is
(C) MATURITY TO CHRISTLIKENESS – becoming like Jesus in life, word, and deed
(D) BEING A GLORIOUS CHURCH – a Church that is sanctified, cleansed, holy and without any fault displaying His glory

This is where we are headed.
This is what God is doing in the Church and bringing us to, just before Jesus returns for His Church!

Some may wonder if it would be possible for the Church to every come to this place where we could see A-D fulfilled. But look at what the Lord has already done. In just 500 years, we've gone from being a spiritually feeble, weak, entity to being the dominant force across the nations. He can and He will fulfil all four of these:

(A)The Church will come to a place of unity of the faith
(B) The Church will come to know Jesus accurately, knowing Jesus for who He really is
(C) The Church, believers, will come to a place of maturity by becoming Christlike, becoming like Jesus in life, word, and deed
(D) The Church will come to a place of being a glorious Church, a Church that is sanctified, cleansed, holy and without any fault displaying His glory

Worship team on stage.

WE GET TO BE A PART OF WHAT GOD IS DOING!

The wonderful thought is you and I get to be part of this – of seeing the Lord do this in us as believers and also be part of making it happen in the Church.

Learn to see your spiritual journey in these four aspects that the Lord Jesus is working in the Church – that is in you and me, and through you and me:

(A)The Church is coming to a place of unity of the faith – are you doing things, living life in a manner that promotes unity of the faith in the Church, that is the Body of believers. Avoid anything that divides, anything that causes disunity.

(B) The Church will come to know Jesus accurately, knowing Jesus for who He really is – look at Jesus for who He is as revealed by the Holy Spirit through the Holy Scriptures. Many times, Jesus is **not** who people say He is. So, we need to go to the Bible and see Him there.

(C) The Church, believers, will come to a place of maturity by becoming Christlike, becoming like Jesus in life, word, and deed – are you allowing God to transform you personally into Christlikeness. Is becoming like Jesus, in life, word and deed, your goal, your vision?

(D) The Church will come to a place of being a glorious Church, a Church that is sanctified, cleansed, holy and without any fault displaying His glory – are you allowing Jesus, to sanctify you, cleanse you, make you holy and blameless, through His Word, so that His glory – virtue and power – can be revealed through you?

What a joy that we get to be part of this – of seeing the Lord do this in us as believers and also be part of making it happen in the Church.

This is the Church's finest hour! And things are going to get better, stronger, and greater!

In God, today is better than yesterday.

We go from glory to glory, from faith to faith, from strength to strength.

The end is always better than the beginning. The latter is greater than the former.

Haggai 2:9
'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The Church is the blood bought and blood washed, redeemed saints of God, who have been made kings and priests unto God!

The Church is Christ's Body on the Earth. We are His hands and His feet. We go where He sends us and do what He tells us!

The Church is the salt of the earth. We release the God flavors into our world. We dispense His life and virtue and preserve righteousness and truth.

The Church is the light of the world. We release the God colors into the earth. We emanate His expressions of wisdom, power, glory and beauty, dispelling darkness and advancing the Kingdom of light.

The Church is the house of God. We are the dwelling place of God on the earth. God dwells in us, moves among us and is seen amongst us.

The Church is the pillar of truth. We uphold truth and are standard bearers for justice, fairness, righteousness, peace, and equity for all.

The Church is the branch on the true Vine. We express the life of the Vine so that His fruit can be seen in and through us.

The Church is the family of God. As sons and daughters, the Father cares for us and we care for each other. As His family we love, welcome, and embrace others as they come into the family of God through personal faith in Jesus Christ.

The Church is a nation of holy people, a peculiar people, a people set apart to Him, to walk in Kingdom culture and values and to declare the praises of the One who brought us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

The Church is the emissary of Christ. We are ambassadors of Christ, reaching out to a hurting world, announcing the good new of the Kingdom of God, and inviting people to be reconciled to God.

The Church are the anointed ones. Sowers sowing seed. Soldiers in conflict. Laborers in the vineyard. Bondservants of Christ. Earthen vessels filled with heavenly treasure. Messengers of good news. Called, appointed and anointed by the Spirit of God, doing His will and releasing His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

The Church is the Bride of Christ. We are set on Him. Our hearts and affections are devoted to Him and we set ourselves apart as a bride for her groom, waiting for that great union in the sky and to be seated at the marriage supper of the Lamb of God!

The Church is the work Christ is building, to whom He has given the keys of the Kingdom. As those authorized in Jesus' name, we bind on earth what heaven has bound and release on earth, what heaven has released.

The Church is the unstoppable move of the Holy Spirit of God through nameless, faceless, men and women, Jews and Gentiles, people from every, race, tongue, tribe, and nation.
This is the Church's finest hour!
This is the Church's brightest day!
This is the Church's greatest moment!
This is the Church's final fray!
And all the powers of hell cannot stop this advancing Church.
This is Christ's Church!

SALVATION CALL

If you ask, does God love me? We can tell you what the Bible says: John 3:16, Romans 5:8
If you ask, how can I have my sins forgiven? We can tell you what the Bible says: Acts 10:43; 1 John 2:2,12
If you ask, what is the way to God? We can tell you what the Bible says: John 14:6
If you ask, how can I become a child of God? We can tell you what the Bible says: John 1:12
If you ask, where can I find salvation? We can tell you what the Bible says: Acts 4:12
If you ask, what must I do to experience salvation? We can tell you what the Bible says: Acts 16:30-31
As an act of your own free choice, we invite you to make this decision to follow Jesus.

SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TIME

Minister as the Spirit leads

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday May 08, 2022
The Church's Finest Hour

The is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation
To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full-length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at our sermons page . Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome
The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship, and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word
Read the following Scripture reference: *Ephesians 4:11-13; Ephesians 5:25-27*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together
Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

1, Discuss the four aspects of God's work in the Church today – as outlined in this sermon:

The five-fold ministries are working to equip the saints and build up the Body of Christ so that we all come to:
(A) THE UNITY OF THE FAITH – we all agree on the Core, while having differing expressions
(B) KNOWING JESUS ACCURATELY - knowing Jesus for who He really is

(C) MATURITY TO CHRISTLIKENESS – becoming like Jesus in life, word, and deed
(D) BEING A GLORIOUS CHURCH – a Church that is sanctified, cleansed, holy and without any fault displaying His glory

2, Discuss the individual believer's part (your part) in seeing these 4 aspects fulfilled – what can an individual believer do to see this fulfilled?

If time permits, each one can take a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey
Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another
Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:
1, families to be protected and strengthened
2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.
3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.

Close by thanking God together.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.
YOUTUBE: https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore
WEBSITE: https://apcwo.org/live

Our other websites and free resources:
CHURCH: https://apcwo.org
FREE SERMONS: https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons
FREE BOOKS: https://apcwo.org/books/english
DAILY DEVOTIONALS: https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional
JESUS CHRIST: https://examiningjesus.com
BIBLE COLLEGE: https://apcbiblecollege.org
E-LEARNING: https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn
WEEKEND SCHOOLS: https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools
COUNSELING: https://chrysalislife.org
MUSIC: https://apcmusic.org
MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: https://pamfi.org
CHURCH APP: https://apcwo.org/app
CHURCHES: https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches
WORLD MISSIONS: https://apcworldmissions.org

SERMON OUTLINE

The sermon reviews the journey the Church has made since it was birthed on the Day of Pentecost, and highlights four aspects of God's work in the Church. We are encouraged to be part of what God is doing in and through the Church. This is the Church's finest hour, as God brings the Church to being a glorious church, faultless and blameless, displaying His glory like never before.

KEYWORDS :

Church, Glorious Church, Triumphant Church, Son of God, sermon, sermons, sermon notes, sermon outline, free sermon notes, free sermon outlines, Bible study resources

REFERENCES/CITATIONS

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